



Commencement Bay NEWSLETTER

An Update on Superfund Sediment Cleanup



November 2003

Photographer: Daniel W. Rome

Cleanup Projects Already Under Way

Commencement Bay Newsletter summarizes the latest events and provides an update on planned cleanup work.

This issue includes bay-wide information and progress reports on three remaining waterway cleanups: Hylebos Waterway, Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways, and Middle Waterway.

An update on the Sitcum Waterway monitoring work is also included in this issue.

We will continue to send separate fact sheets for time-critical announcements about comment periods and public meetings.



U.S. EPA

Head of Hylebos Waterway: Inter-tidal cleanup work completed. Design plans approved for main channel dredging. Relocation of Hylebos Marina will start this fall.

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Mouth of Hylebos Waterway: Cleanup work progressing ahead of schedule may allow other projects to begin sooner than expected. Mitigation at Clear Creek is now under way.

(see page 2)

Middle Waterway: Cleanup on schedule. Majority of cleanup to be completed in January 2004. Cleanup of the head of the waterway will begin in August 2004.

(see page 3)

Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterway: Head of waterway cleanup to be completed in February 2004. Relocation of Foss Marina will start this fall. Dredging is under way in St. Paul Waterway to prepare this disposal area.

(see page 4)

Sitcum Waterway: Monitoring of remedy completed this year finds the eight-year-old remedy continuing to work effectively.

(see page 4)

Summer 2003: Contaminated sediments from Duwamish/Diagonal Way project going upland.

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Head of Hylebos Waterway

General Metals and Atofina Chemicals completed cleanup of the inter-tidal area at the Head of Hylebos. EPA recently approved the final design for dredging the Head of Hylebos. General Metals and Atofina Chemicals will be contracting out the work. Dredging is scheduled to begin in 2004. Dredged material will be off-loaded at the Atofina property and sent by rail to the Roosevelt Landfill. The work recently completed is part of the preparation needed for the work planned for 2004. For more information, contact **Harry Craig** at (503) 326-3689 or craig.harry@epa.gov.

Relocation of the Hylebos Marina expected to start this fall.

Occidental Company is working closely with the Hylebos Marina and its tenants to relocate some of the marina boathouses farther west of their current location by June 2004. Relocation is needed so contaminated sediments can be dredged from areas under the boathouses. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently authorized the construction of a travel lift at the new location. The equipment will allow the Hylebos Marina to operate at the new location. Sediment cleanup at the old location is expected to start in mid-July 2004. For more information, contact **Harry Craig** at (503) 326-3689 or craig.harry@epa.gov.

Mouth of Hylebos

Downstream of the 11th Street bridge: Dredging expected to be completed ahead of schedule.

The Port of Tacoma and the Occidental Company have dredged about 220,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment and placed about 35,000 cubic yards of clean sediment. The total sediment to be removed is 489,000 cubic yards. Contaminated sediments are being disposed of in Blair Slip 1. Cleanup is ahead of schedule. Originally expected to be finished by February next year, the work may be completed this month. This is a significant accomplishment that may allow the contractor to start cleanup work in other areas sooner than expected. For more information, contact **Wallace Reid** at (206) 553-1728 or reid.wallace@epa.gov.

Upcoming Remedial Action: From the 11th Street bridge to the turning basin.

About 145,000 cubic yards of sediment will be dredged and 2,000 linear feet of bank will be capped. Work is scheduled for completion before February 15, 2005. Dredging might start during the current in-water construction season (August 15, 2003 to February 15, 2004), if the Segment 5 dredging is completed ahead of schedule, which now appears likely. For more information, contact **Jonathan Williams** at (206) 553-1369 or williams.jonathan@epa.gov.

Mitigation Under Way

Two acres of new aquatic habitat are being created next to Clear Creek to mitigate the loss of aquatic habitat in Blair Slip 1. "Since the construction of a sediment containment facility in Blair Slip 1 will create dry land on what used to be water, mitigation is required to balance that loss," said **Wallace Reid**, Project Manager for EPA. Other mitigation is also required for the Hylebos cleanup. For more information, contact **Wallace Reid** at (206) 553-1728 or reid.wallace@epa.gov.

Area 5106 Update (former Occidental Chemical site near Dock 1)

Between October 2002 and March 2003, about 36,000 cubic yards of sediment at Area 5106 were dredged, treated on site to reduce solvent concentrations, de-watered, and placed into the Slip 1 confined-disposal facility. Dredging went beyond the design depth. Post-dredge sampling revealed significant contamination still present in the native sediment. In response, EPA required Occidental to do further testing to determine the extent of contaminated sediment remaining within Area 5106. For more information, contact **Jonathan Williams**.

Middle Waterway

In June of 2003, EPA announced two proposed agreements (consent decrees) for the cleanup of Middle Waterway. On August 14, 2003, the consent decrees were finalized when they were officially signed by the federal district court. The Middle Waterway Action Committee (MWAC) worked with EPA to finalize design documents so that work could begin in the mouth and middle portions of the waterway respectively by mid-July. Dredging the waterway began in mid-August.

In addition to dredging, other cleanup work includes piling removal, demolition of Cook's Marine and the scow shed, and capping. A total of 90,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment will be removed and disposed of in Blair Slip 1. This part of the cleanup is expected to be completed by January 2004.



Cook's Marine before demolition.



Cook's Marine during demolition.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is taking the lead on cleanup activities in the head of Middle Waterway. While not required to do so as part of the Superfund cleanup, DNR removed two derelict barges from the waterway to improve habitat conditions for salmon and other aquatic life. DNR is currently working on the design documents for removal of up to 4,000 cubic yards of subsurface sediment contamination at the head of the waterway. This work is expected to begin in August 2004. For more information, contact **Nancy Harney** at (206) 553-6635 or harney.nancy@epa.gov.



Cook's Marine with demolition completed.

Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways

At the Head of the Thea Foss waterway, PacifiCorp, Puget Sound Energy, and Advance Ross Subcompany have completed plans to dredge a relatively small volume of sediments, cap the area, and build a submerged barrier wall across the waterway just north of the SR 509 Bridge. Demolition and debris removal preceded dredging and capping. Late in September, dredging and capping began and are scheduled to be completed in February 2004. Habitat restoration along the banks will be part of that final remedy. An innovative cap will be placed over an oily seep area near the SR-509 bridge. This cap is 75 feet by 70 feet, made of thick plastic, with a 3- to 6-foot sand cap over it.

City of Tacoma's major in-water cleanup begins on Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood waterways

Major environmental cleanup of the Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways is under way. The City of Tacoma plans to dredge 525,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the waterways—enough to fill Museum of Glass cones—during the next three years.

Most of the dredging will begin in 2004. This year, pilings in front of Albers Mill and other locations will be removed, and a portion of the Foss Landing Marina (the old Pick's Cove) in the Thea Foss Waterway will be dismantled to get ready for dredging.

Contractors also are preparing the disposal site in the St. Paul Waterway, where the dredged sediments will be confined. Disposal site preparations include pulling pilings, demolishing an old building, relocating the log haul-out structure, modifying the existing fuel dock, and installing a pipeline to carry sediments to the disposal site. Clean sediments removed from the St. Paul Waterway will be placed on the Puyallup Delta to build up the delta, which benefits salmon. Habitat mitigation will be completed in the Puyallup River, on the disposal site berm, in Middle Waterway, and at several locations throughout the Thea Foss Waterway.

Activities scheduled for later this fall include building a new marina in front of Albers Mill and the Museum of Glass to hold boats moved temporarily during dredging. After the cleanup, the marina will remain as a permanent enhancement to the waterway.

For more information about the cleanup, call the 24-hour Foss Cleanup Hotline at (253) 233-1995 or visit www.cityoftacoma.org/fosscleanup. If your group would like to hear more about the City of Tacoma's cleanup plans, please call **Tara Hazarian**, City of Tacoma Community Relations, at (253) 573-2352 to schedule a presentation.

For more information, contact **Piper Peterson Lee** at (206) 553-4951 or peterson-lee.piper@epa.gov.

Sitcum Waterway Disposal Facility Working as Planned

Contaminated sediments from Sitcum Waterway were placed in a nearshore confined disposal facility (NCDF) in the Milwaukee Waterway, which was finished in 1995. In March 2003, the Port of Tacoma collected groundwater data from wells located within and around the NCDF. These results show that contaminants have not leached out of the sediments and are not going outside the fill. For more information, contact **Karen Keeley** at (206) 553- 2141 or keeley.karen@epa.gov.

Summer 2003

An event that received much attention this summer was a proposal that would have allowed 70,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediments from the Duwamish/Diagonal cleanup project to be sent to Blair Slip 1 in Commencement Bay. The proposal was taken off the table before EPA was able to complete its evaluation. Instead, managers of the Duwamish/Diagonal cleanup project have chosen to send dredged material to the Klickitat County landfill.

EPA held a public meeting in Tacoma on August 22, 2003 to gather public input on the proposal and

needed additional time to thoroughly look at all the pros and cons. About 45 people attended the meeting, and most expressed opposition. EPA is currently working to respond to concerns raised at the meeting. The Agency will announce the availability of this document in a future publication.

EPA is currently evaluating another proposal for disposal of contaminated sediments from the Manke Lumber cleanup project in Blair Slip 1. For more information, contact **Wallace Reid** at (206) 553-1728 or reid.wallace@epa.gov.

Need More Information?

Documents about the Commencement Bay Cleanup are available for review at:

Tacoma Public Library—Main Branch
1102 Tacoma Ave. South
Northwest Room
Tacoma, Washington
(253) 591-5666

Citizens for a Healthy Bay
917 Pacific Avenue, South 406
Tacoma, Washington
(253) 383-2429

Environmental Protection Agency
Superfund Records Center
1200 Sixth Avenue, 7th Floor
Seattle, Washington
(206) 553-4494

Would You Prefer E-mail?

To conserve resources and disseminate information more efficiently, EPA developed an e-mail list for fact sheets.

If you would like to receive fact sheets for the CB/NT Site via e-mail, please send an e-mail to serrano-velez.lilibeth@epa.gov.

If we don't hear from you, we will continue to send out paper copies.





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*An update on Superfund Sediment Cleanup
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QUESTIONS ? COMMENTS?

Call toll-free: 1-800-424-4372. Ask for
Lilibeth Serrano, Community Involvement
Coordinator, direct line: (206) 553-1388.

Alternative formats available upon request. Please call Lilibeth to request reasonable accommodation. TTY users please call 1-800-877-8339.



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